

January 25, 2023

Chair Hornstein and Committee Members:

I'm writing in support of pending legislation HF503, SF577. Please allow me to outline its importance:

I was incarcerated in a federal prison until recently. While incarcerated, my driver's license expired, which was completely due to a prison staff that had absolutely no interest or an understanding in helping any inmates keep licenses and certifications current. As a result, I left prison without a valid driver's license. You may have seen the report from the Government Accountability Office where more than 50% leave without documentation for identification, it is even more complicated to obtain driving privileges for employment. [Opportunities Exist to Better Assist Incarcerated People with Obtaining ID Documents Prior to Release](#)

I was fortunate in that I had family members who were willing to assist me in renewing my license and driving privileges. Even so, the process was extremely difficult...from having to pay for and take tests again, to finding sample tests from which to study, to finding transportation to get me to the Department of Motor Vehicles at inconveniently scheduled times. Without a supportive family, there is no way I would have been able to complete this process. And, let's face it: not everyone who leaves prison has a family on the outside waiting to assist them.

I currently work at the Community Resource center of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church. In my position I encounter many, many people whose life is at a complete standstill because they don't have a valid driver's license. Not having a driver's license has such an incredible domino effect: how can a person work without transportation? How does a person secure transportation without a driver's license? No license, no job, likely no housing...all of this leads a person back to what he or she knows: criminal activity. All which could be avoided if we simply enabled people to live a productive life by removing the barrier for a short period of time until a person is on their feet. This would lead to many positive outcomes for people releasing from incarceration if an unnecessary barrier no longer existed.

Please support this change, many people's lives and families depend on it.

Sincerely,

Tyrone Herman
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